



Volunteer Driver Programs Guide

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Note: We are thankful for the work and contributions of Trina Joy, a Douglas College Social Work practicum student, who contributed to the writing of this document.

Introduction



Preface

United Way British Columbia acknowledges the homelands of the Indigenous Peoples of this place we now call British Columbia and honours the many territorial keepers of the Lands on which we work.

Introduction

Welcome to United Way British Columbia's *Volunteer Driver Programs Guide*.

With you, we are committed to empowering volunteers to get involved in their community's Community Based Seniors Services (CBSS) programs. Volunteers bring valuable skills and talents to help seniors and Elders age independently at home while remaining active, connected and engaged.

This guidance resource is limited to one volunteer management scenario: where a volunteer driver donates their time to drive (operate) their own vehicle to transport a senior passenger(s) on behalf of a nonprofit organization. Typically, the senior is being driven for medical appointments or community-based appointments.



ICBC Basic Insurance Tariff Definition of a Volunteer Driver

A person who donates time to driving a vehicle for a charitable organization, whether or not the charitable organization reimburses them for the cost of operating the car, including the cost of gasoline and specific expenses for wear and tear, but not including depreciation.

This guidance is intended to provide guidance, not detailed instruction. Agencies are best positioned to determine how best to meet the needs of their volunteers and clients while meeting fiduciary and legal responsibilities. Agencies are encouraged to speak to their insurers and seek advice regarding risk and liability issues.

This resource was created with volunteers and program coordinators in mind. It is organized by themes that follow the volunteer management cycle. The volunteer management cycle is a robust, dependable framework for viewing and thinking about volunteer engagement. For our purpose, our framework includes the following elements:

1. Planning and Designing
2. Recruitment
3. Screening and Placement
4. Orientation, Training and Supervision
5. Recognition
6. Evaluation

By considering what is needed in each element of the cycle, volunteer-supported transportation programs have the best chance of meeting the needs of seniors in the community.



“ I noticed positive changes when my organization started prioritizing the work of having all our volunteer management pieces in place for our transportation driving program. We spent less time problem-solving, and the staff felt more supported. The biggest change is that we developed the confidence to build a bigger and stronger volunteer force because we had the structure and know-how to back up our growth. ”

~ Volunteer Coordinator



The Healthy Aging Team at United Way British Columbia offers a range of support to organizations regarding volunteer management and engagement. We'd love to hear from you! For more information, contact healthyaging@uwbc.ca.

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Chapter One: Planning and Design



“ We began to ask ourselves: Can we plan for a safer and more rewarding experience for the volunteer and older adult in our transportation program? The honest answer was yes, but we needed a roadmap to help us get there. ”

~ Executive Director

Planning and design are essential in a volunteer-powered transportation program. Even programs that are operating successfully benefit from periodically and systematically reviewing operations. Planning and design are also essential for organizations developing or expanding their programs.

A key part of the planning and design process is a commitment to having robust policies, practices and procedures regarding volunteers. This commitment helps supported transportation programs achieve the following:

- Ability to systematically evaluate and assess the program’s goals, plans and initiatives.
- Ability to advocate for resources and budget for volunteer management.
- Evaluating insurance policies to ensure that volunteer and organizational liabilities are addressed.
- Smoother operations; not issue-free but proactive, accountable and responsive.
- Identification and mitigation of liability and risk factors.
- A clear delineation determining if a person is a volunteer under the organization’s insurance policies.

Chapter One: Planning and Design

- Increased confidence by program coordinators to build volunteer capacity.
- Increased likelihood of volunteers' success in their roles, leading to more satisfaction and retention.
- Ability to include seasoned volunteers' experience and insight in the planning and designing processes.
- Meeting community needs with a robust and responsive volunteer team.

To begin this work, it's helpful to recognize the unique attributes of volunteer transportation drivers that may differ from those of other volunteer roles.

Key attributes include:

- A volunteer's use of their personal vehicle.
- Volunteer activities primarily occur off-site.
- A volunteer is required to have a current Class 5 license.
- Requires volunteers to have adequate vehicle insurance.
- Requires volunteers to have advanced training and orientation.
- May require knowledge of technology supports such as digital navigation.
- In some cases, it may involve donation handling.
- Requires extra paperwork management for the volunteer, including mileage reimbursement.

When engaging in planning and design work, it's helpful to assess what policies, best practices, procedures, and tools are already in place and which ones need to be created or developed. It's also beneficial to periodically review and monitor policies and procedures to gauge their effectiveness and update them as needed.



See [Appendix A](#), for tools and resources related to planning and design:

- Key Planning & Design Resources
- Policy Check List

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Chapter Two: Recruitment



Recruitment refers to the various processes involved in attracting volunteers to your organization or the supported transportation role if they are already in your organization. The following are beneficial to have in place to support your recruitment efforts:

- Recruitment plan tailored to address the unique attributes of the volunteer driver role.
- Well-articulated and comprehensive volunteer position descriptions, including necessary qualifications and time commitment, and requirements identifying the minimum standards and expectations for volunteering in this role. Recruitment messages should be clear and realistic.
- A prominent and easy-to-access online volunteer application form that includes the position description.
- Commitment and awareness by all staff about recruitment needs and priorities.



See [Appendix B](#), for tools and resources related to recruitment:

- Recruitment Plan Components
- Top 5 Competencies of a Supported Transportation Volunteer
- Recruitment Messaging
- Recruitment Venues
- iVolunteer.ca
- Sample Volunteer Position Description
- Example Volunteer Driver Application Form

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Chapter Three: Screening and Placement



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Screening is considered an essential component of sound human resource management. It is broadly defined as an ongoing process that helps better match people and organizations, improves the safety and quality of programs, and reduces risks and liability.

~ Volunteer Canada

”

A robust screening and placement process ensures that volunteers are engaged according to their abilities, skills, and interests. It also provides us with an opportunity to start assessing the volunteer's level of risk for the role. Because supported transportation programs have unique attributes that involve increased risk, the assessment level should reflect the risk level.

The following are beneficial to have in place to support your screening and placement efforts:

- Review the volunteer application and consider pre-defined screening criteria
- Personal reference check process.
- Welcoming 'get to know' (interview) process.
- Checklist of key documentation requirements for a volunteer's file.
- Vehicle Insurance requirements.
- Basic vehicle assessment tools (cleanliness, physical access points, safety).
- A process for the Criminal Review Program (CRRP), vulnerable sector check, required by the Criminal Records Review Act to protect children and vulnerable adults.



Learn more about how United Way British Columbia's recruitment platform [iVolunteer.ca](https://ivolunteer.ca) facilitates vulnerable sector checks for volunteers: [iVolunteer Powered by United Way British Columbia](https://ivolunteer.ca)

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See [Appendix C](#), for tools and resources related to recruitment:

- Documentation Checklist
- Key Recruitment Resources

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Chapter Four: Orientation, Training, & Supervision



Orientations introduce and connect volunteers to the organization's mission and values. Training provides volunteers with the skills and knowledge needed to perform their assigned roles, and supervision refers to the active and ongoing monitoring of the volunteers' involvement. The following components can support your orientation, training and supervision efforts:

- A training plan, including initial training commitments and ongoing training commitments that are completed over time.
- A plan for volunteer supervision or oversight based on the complexity and risk.
- Policies the organization employs for health and safety, including volunteer privacy and confidentiality expectations, code of ethics and conduct for volunteers, non-discrimination policy, non-harassment policy, policies related to donations and gifts, inclement weather driving policy, and Infection prevention and control.
- Written client ride process.
- Written donations process, where necessary.
- Written incident and accident protocols.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

Chapter Four: Orientation, Training, & Supervision

- Volunteer time log: tracking instructions.
- Volunteer mileage tracking instructions.
- Passenger and volunteer safety and comfort considerations: best practices and limitations regarding safe boarding and unboarding processes, securing passengers, and assisting with mobility devices (wheelchairs, scooters and canes) while getting in and out of the vehicle.
- Emergency protocols and expectations.



See [Appendix D](#), for tools and resources related to orientation, training and supervision:

- Volunteer Training Topics List
- Setting Limits for Volunteers
- Volunteer Resource: Boundary Setting
- Volunteer Resource: Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity
- Volunteer Resource: Challenging Situations
- Volunteer Resource: Compassion Fatigue

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Chapter Five: Volunteer Recognition



Volunteer recognition acknowledges accomplishments and reinforces volunteers' positive efforts and the impact they are having. It also recognizes that volunteers are a part of the agency's human resource team. A well-defined volunteer recognition program is a strategy for retaining volunteers, especially for hard-to-fill positions.

The following are beneficial to have in place to support your volunteer recognition efforts:

- Volunteer recognition plan.
- Volunteer recognition innovations for supported transportation.



See [Appendix E](#), for tools and resources related to volunteer recognition:

- Volunteer Recognition Ideas



Chapter Six: Evaluation



Evaluation refers to the structured assessment of how well your volunteer program is performing. It involves collecting data on various aspects, such as volunteer engagement, program outcomes, and community impact. These processes help identify what training the volunteer may need and what adjustments or improvements may be needed in the volunteer management process.

Evaluation refers to two key processes:

1. An evaluative process that gives the coordinator insight and feedback about a volunteer's performance.
2. A volunteer providing insight and feedback about a volunteer program.

Many volunteer evaluation practices range from informal and impromptu to formal.

Examples include:

- Casual check-ins based on opportunity and proximity.
- Formal performance review.
- Formal assessments to confirm the volunteer can continue in their role.
- Volunteer satisfaction surveys.
- Exit interview or survey.

Chapter Six: Evaluation

The following are beneficial to have in place to support your evaluation efforts:

- Volunteer dismissal policy and procedure.
- Scheduled volunteer check-in processes.
- Scheduled client check-in processes that refer to volunteer interactions.
- Processes that encourage volunteer feedback.
- Volunteer disciplinary policies.
- Survey or feedback mechanism from volunteers to learn about their experiences.
- Survey or feedback mechanism from seniors using the services.
- Periodically evaluate if volunteers are fit to provide transportation services.



See [Appendix E](#), for tools and resources related to volunteer recognition:

- Example Evaluation Questions

Appendix A

Key Resources

Several key resources are available for your organization; they can help support your planning and design processes:

Volunteer Cancer Drivers Society

The Volunteer Cancer Drivers Society (VCDS) is a not-for-profit organization that provides free, safe, timely, and efficient transportation to and from cancer-related medical appointments throughout the Lower Mainland. VCDS has made its volunteer handbook publicly available on its website for its own volunteers. Thank you to the VCDS for its leadership in making this resource available to other agencies.

Driver's handbook: [DriversHandbook-May-2024.pdf \(volunteercancerdrivers.ca\)](https://volunteercancerdrivers.ca/DriversHandbook-May-2024.pdf)

Volunteer Canada

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement (CCVI) is widely recognized as a symbol for championing effective volunteer engagement and support in non-profit organizations. Putting the Code Into Action is a resource designed to help organizations implement each of the ten standards of practice in the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement (CCVI). [Volunteer Canada Putting the Code Into Action.pdf](https://volunteer.ca/putting-the-code-into-action.pdf)

Organizational Staff Policies

If you need to build your policies, consider utilizing your existing employment policies as a starting point. Adapting existing staff policies can bring alignment and integrity to your volunteer policies.

Your Organization's Insurer: Organizations have general liability insurance, which protects them from losses and claims made by third parties for injury or damage to property. Organizations should consult with their insurer to confirm limitations to liability insurance for volunteers.

Policy Checklist for Volunteer-Powered Supported Transportation Programs

- ☐ Records management
- ☐ Privacy and confidentiality
- ☐ Code of ethics and conduct
- ☐ Policies that support inclusion, accessibility and diversity
- ☐ Non-discrimination policy
- ☐ Non-harassment policy
- ☐ Donations
- ☐ Gifts
- ☐ Inclement weather driving
- ☐ Infection prevention and control
- ☐ Risk assessment commitment (on a regular basis)
- ☐ Feedback
- ☐ Dismissal

Agencies must stay informed on current legislation, including Human Rights Codes and other relevant guidelines for records management, privacy, access to information and confidentiality practices.

Appendix B

Recruitment Plan Components

The components of a recruitment plan include:

- ☑ Core competencies required for the role.
- ☑ Messaging indicating the impact volunteers have and the benefits of volunteering in the roles.
- ☑ Volunteer position description.
- ☑ List of places to advertise.
- ☑ Easy-to-use and easy-to-access volunteer registration form.

Top 5 Core Competencies of a Supported Transportation Volunteer

Core competencies refer to the essential qualities, knowledge, personal attitudes, and skills that enable your volunteer to excel. Competencies can help determine baseline needs when recruiting volunteers.

- 1. Communication:** Ability to communicate clearly with staff, other volunteers, and older adults. The volunteer's communication style is polite and friendly. Capable of creating a welcoming and supportive environment for older adults.
- 2. Organized:** Ability to manage volunteer schedules, paperwork and other responsibilities well and in a timely fashion.
- 3. Discerning:** Observant and can assess situations in real-time and communicate processes and professional/organizational boundaries that reduce harm.
- 4. Responsible:** Capable of being aware of and committed to upholding the organization's expectations.

Appendix B: Recruitment

Recruitment Messaging

Because supported transportation volunteers have unique attributes, recruitment for this role often requires extra effort, strategy and consideration. If your organization has an established recruitment strategy for all volunteers, it can be helpful to consider what adaptations are needed to attract volunteer drivers effectively.

Some questions to consider:

- How can you develop a recruitment message that will appeal to prospective drivers and grab their attention?
- What kind of audience would your recruitment message resonate with?
- How can you make this volunteer position attractive to volunteer drivers?

Here is some recruitment messaging that can boost the attractiveness of this role:

- Flexibility: Identify that volunteers can choose their shifts based on availability. This will ensure that volunteers know that their limits will be respected from the start.
- Training and support: Identify that you provide ongoing support and check-ins to help the volunteer get comfortable and succeed. This supports volunteers needing encouragement to step into a new volunteer role.
- Social connection: Highlight any opportunities for your volunteers to socialize and connect with others, including other volunteers.
- Volunteer appreciation: Be proactive in sharing how your organization appreciates and cherishes its volunteers.
- Mileage reimbursement: proactively advertise any policies that mitigate volunteer costs.
- Collect and share volunteer quotes to inspire and personalize your recruitment messages.



Appendix B: Recruitment

Recruitment Venues:

Sometimes, we need to make a special effort and go beyond the usual places we advertise for volunteers. Here are some recruitment venues that you might consider approaching to make a presentation or offer recruitment materials:

- Professional retiree associations
- Community and older adult service organizations
- Social clubs
- Volunteer Centers
- Educational institutions
- Local police departments
- Local town boards
- Local governments
- Chambers of commerce
- Local real estate agencies
- Networking events and meetings
- Word of mouth and personal referrals
- Collaboration with local businesses and organizations.
- Social media and online platforms, including iVolunteer.ca



Appendix B: Recruitment



iVolunteer Powered by United Way British Columbia

iVolunteer.ca is a free volunteer recruitment and management platform to connect your non-profit or charitable organization with United Way British Columbia's volunteers. Our volunteers bring diverse experiences, cultures, and perspectives that can help your organization strengthen its vital connection to the community while increasing the capacity of your programs and services.

Sample Volunteer Position Description

The following sample volunteer position description is an optional and adaptable resource.

Supported Transportation for Seniors in [geographical area]!

[Organization's Name/Program's Name] volunteers help seniors who live in the following areas: [geographical regions]. Our Better at Home programs support low or modest-income seniors with simple, day-to-day tasks that allow them to live independently and remain connected to their communities.

What you will be helping with:

- Driving seniors and assisting them to get to their medical or other essential appointments.
- Picking the seniors up after the appointment to take them home.
- In some cases, a senior may need extra support. You may walk them to the reception desk and pick them up at the reception desk afterward.
- Volunteers do not attend medical appointments.

Other Helpful Information:

- We work with your schedule and availability.
- Must have a valid BC Driver's License.
- Must own or have access to a vehicle in good operating condition.
- Must have adequate insurance coverage (more information available).
- Driver's Abstract indicating a safe driving record.

Appendix B: Recruitment

- This volunteer role would be a good fit for those with some free time during daytime hours.
- Training and ongoing support are provided.
- Mileage reimbursement: [conditions for mileage reimbursement].
- Volunteer appreciation program

Interested? Next Steps:

- Learn more about the volunteer opportunity by meeting with our Better at Home coordinator in person or by phone. To schedule a meeting, please contact [staff contact name] at [contact information].
- Complete a criminal record check – vulnerable sector. This is a standard procedure to ensure the safety and well-being of our seniors. The check can be completed online through the iVolunteer site or with our organization.
- Complete the orientation process: [approximate length of time commitment].

Example Volunteer Driver Application Form

Here is an example of a robust volunteer driver application form. They explain who they are, what kind of volunteer they are looking for, their basic requirements and what they can offer.

[Driver Application – Volunteer Cancer Drivers Society](#)

Appendix C

Checklist of key documentation requirements for a volunteer's file

A checklist is a structured and comprehensive list of items, tasks, or documents that must be gathered, reviewed, completed, or verified. It's a tool to ensure that all necessary components are accounted for and adequately addressed before a volunteer begins their role.

- ☐ Signed volunteer liability waiver
- ☐ Copy of ICBC Driver's Abstract (driving history)
- ☐ Copy of valid driver's license
- ☐ Copy of current auto insurance policy and vehicle registration
- ☐ Copy of criminal record check
- ☐ A basic vehicle assessment ensures essential cleanliness, physical access points, and safety checks.
- ☐ Car kits provided for volunteers (organizational contact information, masks, hand sanitizer and accident and incident worksheet)
- ☐ Signed acknowledgement of privacy and confidentiality policy
- ☐ Signed acknowledgement of Code of Ethics and Conduct for volunteers
- ☐ Signed acknowledgement of non-discrimination policy
- ☐ Signed acknowledgement of non-harassment policy
- ☐ Signed acknowledgement of donations and gifts policy
- ☐ Signed acknowledgement of inclement weather driving policy
- ☐ Signed acknowledgement of infection prevention and control policy
- ☐ Signed acknowledgement of accident and incident policy

Appendix C: Screening and Placement

Resources:

Volunteer Canada's Screening Handbook: for tools and resources related to screening: <https://volunteer.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2012-Edition-of-the-Screening-Handbook.pdf>

Criminal Records Review Program – Policing and Security Branch Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General:

[CRRP's new online platform is now live! - Province of British Columbia](#)

Orientation Package for organizations accessing the online platform: [Download Orientation Package PDF](#)

Applicant guide for completing a criminal record check: [Download Applicant Guide PDF](#)

Appendix D

Volunteer Training Topics

An established list of essential training topics can help guide the training process. A good rule of thumb is to ensure that the training topics address all of the procedures and best practices that arise from organizational policies. Consider pacing training in a way that sets the volunteer up for success by integrating training topics over time. Provide hard copies of training materials for the volunteers to take away and have as a reference.

Suggested training topics:

- Organizational mission, mandate, history and structure
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Code of Ethics and Conduct
- Non-discrimination
- Non-harassment
- Donations and gifts
- Inclement weather driving
- Infection prevention and control
- Accident and incident procedures and worksheet
- Written client ride process
- Volunteer time tracking instructions
- Volunteer mileage tracking instructions
- Boundaries and limits
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Challenging situations
- Compassion fatigue and self-care

Volunteer Engagement Resources on Healthy Aging Core BC

<https://bc.healthyagingcore.ca/volunteer-engagement>

Appendix D: Orientation, Training and Supervision

Setting Limits for Volunteers

It's essential to clearly state what your supported transportation volunteers can and can't do and let them know you are there to help them maintain their boundaries. Identifying what volunteer tasks are excluded from volunteer duties and organizational expectations is critical. Walking through or role-playing some scenarios with the volunteer can be helpful in training.

"What should I (volunteer) do?"

- The senior wants to make an extra trip after the planned trip.
- The senior invited me into their house for a visit.
- The senior gave me a donation.
- The senior gave me a gift.
- I want to do things for the seniors outside my volunteer time.
- The senior asked me to do things for them outside my volunteer time.
- I'm concerned by something the senior said or did.
- The senior or the environment made me feel unsafe.
- The senior asked me to attend the medical appointment with them.
- The senior was sedated, and I've been asked to take care of the senior after the appointment.

Volunteer Resource: Boundary Setting

Boundaries are the limits of appropriate conduct to maintain a safe therapeutic environment for clients, staff, and volunteers. They are the framework that informs seniors about what behaviour they can expect from us while receiving support and what is expected of them.

Anyone working with a senior can uphold these professional boundaries by:

- Understand and adhere to our program's policies and/or best practices, confidentiality, privacy, and/or professional standards.
- Set clear expectations about what the client can expect and what is expected of them.
- Provide clarity about our role, including the service limits (i.e., location and frequency).
- Be clear and assertive when someone misbehaves or makes you feel unsafe.

Appendix D: Orientation, Training and Supervision

- Maintain consistent communication standards.
- Avoiding or limiting self-disclosure.
- Remaining conscious of challenging personal feelings and seeking support whenever needed.
- Remember that endings are inevitable; saying goodbye is a natural part of your work.

We must be alert for signs of 'over-involvement' with a senior we are supporting and be aware of our internal judgments. Boundaries require us to help someone with compassion while remaining relatively objective. If our boundaries are not clear and consistent, we may experience emotional fragility, exhaustion, grief, and burnout.

Signs of Unclear (or a Loss) of Boundaries:

- Difficulty setting limits.
- Consistently feeling sad, anxious, fearful, or angry after supporting a senior.
- Over-involvement or losing oneself in the work.
- Feeling cynical and experiencing hardened feelings.
- Having our own emotional needs met through a relationship with a senior.
- Feeling 'burned out'.

Volunteer Resource: Cultural Sensitivity & Diversity

How can you work with seniors in a way that respects their diversity? A good start is to avoid making assumptions about a person's beliefs, attitudes, or behaviours based on their culture or background. Instead, engage with them to learn about their values and preferences.

Factors that contribute to diversity include:

- Geographic and cultural backgrounds
- Age, race, and ethnicity
- Gender Identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation
- Preferred languages
- Religious and family traditions
- Education and socioeconomic status
- Cognitive, sensory, and physical abilities

Appendix D: Orientation, Training and Supervision

Ideas for providing culturally sensitive care include:

- Reflect on your background, beliefs, and values, and consider how they affect how you approach others. Think about your feelings about aging and how they might influence your interactions with seniors.
- Use inclusive language (language that avoids using certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people) in written and verbal discussions.
- Be open to using a senior's preferred pronouns. Normalizing the concept of preferred pronouns can help communities become more aware of and accepting of gender-nonconforming people.
- Take time to learn the proper pronunciation of each person's name. If you're unsure of how to pronounce a name, ask them to pronounce it for you instead of guessing.
- Ask for permission before touching, regardless of age, gender or ability. This helps seniors feel agency and protection over personal space and physical contact.
- Learn cultural customs about eye contact, physical contact, and hand gestures in any community or group you work closely with.

Volunteer Resource: Challenging Situations

Occasionally, a situation may arise where the senior is distressed or begins to act aggressively or with difficulty. Escalating behaviour is a pattern of intensifying emotional and physical responses to stimuli, often resulting in agitation. What starts as a minor irritation can quickly become a challenging situation.

Signs of escalating behaviour include body language, voice, mood, and behaviour changes. They can also include reduced communication and verbal aggression.

- Body language showed clenched fists and tense muscles.
- Voice raised volume or tone.
- Mood irritability and defensiveness.
- Behaviour pacing, fidgeting, reduced communication, and verbal aggression.

Appendix D: Orientation, Training and Supervision

These de-escalation tips can help support compassion while the senior is distressed:

1. Be Empathetic and Nonjudgmental

Do not judge or dismiss the feelings of the person in distress. Remember that the person's feelings are real, whether or not you think those feelings are justified. Respect those feelings, as whatever the person is going through could be a critical event.

2. Respect Personal Space

Be aware of your position, posture, and proximity when interacting with a distressed person. Allowing personal space shows respect, keeps you safer, and decreases anxiety. If you must enter someone's personal space, explain what you're doing so the person feels less confused and frightened.

3. Use Non-threatening Nonverbals

The more a person is in distress, the less they hear your words—and the more they react to your nonverbal communication. Be mindful of your gestures, facial expressions, movements, and tone of voice. Keeping your tone and body language neutral will go a long way toward defusing a situation.

4. Keep Your Emotional Brain in Check

Remain calm, rational, and professional. While you can't control the person's behaviour, your response directly affects whether the situation escalates or defuses.

5. Focus on Feelings

Facts are essential, but how a person feels is the heart of the matter. Watch and listen carefully for the person's real message. Try saying something like, "That must be upsetting." Supportive words will validate their experience, and you may get a positive response.

6. Ignore Challenging Questions

Engaging with people who ask challenging questions is rarely productive. When a person challenges your authority, redirect their attention to the issue. Ignore the challenge but not the person. Bring the focus back to how you can work together to solve the problem.

7. Set Limits

As a person progresses through a crisis, set respectful, simple, and reasonable limits and offer concise and respectful choices. An upset person may not be able to focus on everything you say. Be clear, speak, and provide a positive choice first.

8. Choose Wisely What You Insist Upon

It's essential to be thoughtful in deciding which rules are negotiable and which are not. Can you offer a person options and flexibility, such as completing a housekeeping task at another time?

9. Allow Silence for Reflection

Silence can be a powerful communication tool, allowing people to reflect on what's happening and how they need to proceed.

Appendix D: Orientation, Training and Supervision

10. Allow Time for Decisions

When a person is upset, they may be unable to think clearly. Give them a few moments to think through what you've said. A person's stress rises when they feel rushed. Allowing time brings calm.

Please remember that your safety as a volunteer is always the priority. There may be situations where the safest thing to do is leave and report the problem to the appropriate person. If you have concerns based on an interaction during your visit, please follow your agency protocols and contact your program coordinator.

Volunteer Resource: Compassion Fatigue

Under certain conditions, volunteers who work closely with seniors may experience exhaustion and self-doubt. This is called compassion fatigue, which is prevalent among anyone working directly with people who depend on others for their well-being.

In many cases, the person affected by compassion fatigue doesn't realize it is happening. If you observe any of the following symptoms, you may be experiencing compassion fatigue.

- Loss of sleep
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feelings of self-doubt, failure, guilt, self-doubt, sadness, and powerlessness
- Reduced sense of efficacy on the job
- Feeling overwhelmed with obligations
- Apathy and emotional numbness, pessimism
- Isolation and withdrawal

How do we combat compassion fatigue?

Self-care is essential in protecting yourself against compassion fatigue. Often, those constantly wrapped up in the needs of others forget about their own needs. Proper self-care will look different for each person, but it should generally include the following:

- Regular exercise, a healthful diet, & plenty of restful sleep
- Appropriate work/life balance
- Honouring emotional needs
- Set emotional boundaries: the challenge of working with others is to remain empathetic and compassionate without becoming excessively involved. Setting emotional boundaries allows you to keep a connection while remembering that you are an individual with needs.

Appendix E

Volunteer Recognition Ideas

When we find consistent and meaningful ways of recognizing supported transportation volunteers, we have the best chance of keeping our volunteers for the long run. Not all volunteers are the same, so the kind of recognition that works for one volunteer may not be as effective for another. Do you know what motivates your volunteers? This information is helpful for your recognition and retention strategies. Here are some creative and meaningful volunteer recognition examples that can make volunteers feel appreciated, valued, and motivated to continue their work:

- Personalized thank-you notes, either handwritten or digital, acknowledge their specific contributions. It is a small but powerful gesture to personalize these notes to mention their work and the difference it has made.
- Public recognition: with permission, feature your supported transportation volunteers in newsletters, on the organization's website, or social media platforms. Share their stories, why they volunteer, and how their work has impacted the cause.
- Volunteer appreciation events: host a formal or casual event celebrating volunteers. You can provide certificates or other small gifts. Themed Celebrations can be fun, such as a "Thank You" picnic, a holiday party, or a casual "Volunteer Appreciation Day" in the park. Food, music, and fun go a long way to making volunteers feel valued.
- Certificates or awards: provide volunteers with a certificate of appreciation or achievement, customized with their name and specific contributions.
- Special awards: create unique awards, such as "Volunteer of the Year" or "Leadership Award," to recognize traits like reliability, leadership, or commitment.
- Small tokens of appreciation: low-cost or no-cost gifts, such as offering discounts related to transportation (for example, a local car washing or detailing business).
- Custom swag: branded T-shirts, mugs, water bottles, or tote bags with the organization's logo can be a tangible reminder of their impact.
- Personalized gifts: Customized items like engraved pens, thank-you plaques, or custom artwork (e.g., a portrait of the volunteer in action) show appreciation thoughtfully.
- Lunch or coffee with leadership: arrange for leadership to take a volunteer out for lunch, coffee, or a casual meet-up to express appreciation and personally connect with them.

Appendix D: Orientation, Training and Supervision

- Volunteer appreciation wall or video: create a physical or digital wall where you post pictures or stories about volunteers and their impact. Alternatively, produce a short video with clips of volunteers talking about their experiences and why they love giving their time to your organization.
- Celebrating milestone anniversaries: Celebrate the anniversaries of when volunteers first started with your organization. Recognize volunteers when they reach a specific number of hours contributed, such as 100, 500, or even 1,000 hours.
- Volunteer of the month/year: feature a standout volunteer each month or year, spotlighting their work in a dedicated post, email, or on a physical board.
- Professional development opportunities: offer free workshops, training sessions, or access to conferences that could help them develop personally or professionally. This investment in their growth shows that you value them beyond their volunteer role.

Appendix F

Example Evaluation Questions for Volunteers

- What motivates you to volunteer?
- What was your primary motivation for volunteering with us?
- What values do you hold dear? In what ways does your involvement with our organization meet these community needs?
- In what ways can our organization better support you in your role as a volunteer?
- What is your preferred method of communication (email, text, phone call, etc.)?
- How did you find out about our organization? (e.g., newspaper, email, direct mail, online ad, billboard, coworker, friends and family, social media, etc.)
- How did you complete your registration with our organization? (e.g., online, by mail, in-person, etc.)
- Are there any aspects of the application process that could be improved?
- Were the position requirements precise to you?
- How prepared did you feel for your volunteer role?
- Where did you feel there were gaps in your training, and how can we enhance that training process?
- How satisfied does this volunteering experience make you feel?
- How valued do you feel as a member of our volunteer team?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, how likely are you to volunteer with us again?
- How likely are you to recommend our volunteer opportunities to others?
- If you could change anything about your volunteering experience, what would it be?
- Do you have suggestions for enhancing our volunteer experience and opportunities?

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